



The Ecological Farming Association
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August 4, 2005

Jim Riddle, Chair of NOSB
c/o Ms. Francine Torres
USDA-AMS-TMD-NOP
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Room 4008-S, Mail Stop 0268
Washington, DC 20250-0200

Dear Mr. Riddle,

I'm writing this letter in support of the biodiversity amendments to NOSB's model Organic System Plan (OSP). The Ecological Farming Association has for years addressed biodiversity issues at our premier West Coast sustainable agriculture conference and other events we do throughout the year. It is a topic farmers care deeply about, both philosophically and because they know incorporating biodiversity can help with the bottom line.

The National Organic Program rule requires biodiversity conservation, but up until now it has not been properly addressed. With the NOSB's approval of biodiversity criteria, there will be consistent guidance to farmers, inspectors, certifiers and accreditation auditors. This will help to establish a common expectation of what it means to conserve biodiversity and to maintain or improve the natural resources of the farm, instead of each individual farmer or certifier figuring it out on their own.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,

Kristin Rosenow
Director